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THE HUGUENOTS

as Founders and Patriots



"Steadfast for God and Country"

An Address by

THEODORE GILMAN

Governor of the New York Society

delivered before

The New York Society

of the

Order of the Founders and Patriots of America.

at the

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THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AS THE FOUNDER PERIOD OF THE NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES.

Emigrations from Europe to America to permanent settlements began at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. They were caused chiefly by historical events in Europe and may therefore be classified historically. They ceased at the beginning of the 18th Century and were resumed at its close.

1607-1630.—The Virginian, Pilgrim and Dutch Period.—Jamestown was founded in 1607; the Pilgrims landed in 1620; the Dutch settled New Amsterdam, now New York, in 1624.

1630-1640.—The John Winthrop and Baltimore Period.—During these ten years about 300 ships arrived in New England bringing 21,000 immigrants. The dissolution of the Third Parliament by Charles I, in 1630, was taken by the Puritans to be the death of their hopes and the triumph of personal government and the Romanists. These immigrants were influenced chiefly by religious motives. In 1632 Maryland was settled by a Romanist colony under Lord Baltimore. In 1635 Connecticut was first settled.

1640-1660.—The Long Parliament, Cromwell and North Carolina Period.—The autocratic, personal government of Charles I broke hopelessly down in 1640 and he was compelled to convene what was called the Long Parliament. This revived the hopes of the Puritans, who regarded the calling of the Long Parliament as the triumph of liberty and law over absolutism. "The change," wrote Governor John Winthrop, "made all men stay in England in expectation of a new world." First settlement in North Carolina about Albemarle Sound in 1650.

1660-1689.—The Charles II, James II, Regicide and Penn Period.—The restoration of Charles II caused the flight of three regicides to this country to save their lives—William Goffe, Edward Whalley and John Dixwell—who arrived about 1661. The grave of Cromwell was violated. "These changes (1662) in the mother country occasioned some emigration to New England, but not to any great extent" (Hildreth, Vol. I, page 453). "Of the unfortunate prisoners taken in Monmouth's insurrection (1685), a large number were shipped to America to be sold as indented servants" (Hildreth, Vol. II, page 105). South Carolina settled and Charlestown founded 1680. The dates of Penn's two visits to Pennsylvania were 1682 and 1699.

1689-1702.—The William and Mary and Huguenot Period.—The troubles before and after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) caused the emigration to America of Huguenots 1681 to 1700. They were scattered through the colonies from Massachusetts to South Carolina. New Rochelle, New York, was settled at this time. Among other arrivals at Boston was Benjamin Harris, author of the *New England Primer* (1690).

1697.—In this year the PEACE OF RYSWICK was ratified, which ended the contests and wars of the 17th Century by mutual restitutions of conquests. The title of William and Mary to the throne of England was acknowledged. France and England were each to enjoy the territories possessed by them before the war.

THIS MARKS THE END OF THE FOUNDER PERIOD.

1700.—"Many good men have come to this country since the year 1700, but those who came before that date, out of the seething cauldron of European contests, form a class by themselves."

THE HUGUENOTS

as Founders and Patriots



THE preparation of this address was well under way before notice was received that the Connecticut Society would bring up at the annual meeting in May, 1913, our Eligibility Clause. It was then too late to make a change in the program, and this address should be considered not an argument on the subject of eligibility, but as a historical discussion of a most important phase of the development of our country.

Who were the Founders and Patriots of our country is beyond the authority or power of any organization or order to determine. The acts of the men themselves and the verdict of history must decide that question. The brave men who emigrated here inspired by high motives and who have sealed their devotion to the cause of religious liberty and political freedom with their lives and fortunes, have created the Order of Founders and Patriots above our power to add or detract from their honor. The world will little note or long remember the limit of time and the dates we may fix for eligibility to our Order, but it can never forget who the Founders and Patriots were or what they did in the wilds of this wild country, and in the councils and on the battlefields of the Revolution. It is for us to inquire what were the motives which led these men to dedicate themselves to the great task of founding and perpetuating this nation, to which they gave the last full measure of devotion, and to highly resolve that the government they established shall not perish from the earth.*

The history of the Huguenots centers round the Edict of Nantes, which was promulgated by Henry IV in 1598, and which was revoked in 1685 by his grandson, Louis XIV. The Edict was the wisest act in French history. Its object was to end the religious contests which had culminated in the dread-

*Lincoln's Gettysburg speech is the common property of all Americans.

ful slaughter of St. Bartholomew's Day, October 22, 1572, which is the foulest blot on the modern history of Europe. While the Edict gave to the Protestants of France only a position subordinate to the Roman Church, it recognized their rights and gave them legal protection. It denied the name of church to their houses of worship, which were thereupon called temples. It restricted them in many ways, but relieved them temporarily from the fear of the recurrence of fanatical persecution.

While the Puritans of England were threatened with persecution under the absolute government of Charles I, and were seeking shelter in our inhospitable coasts from a worse inhospitality at home, the Protestants of France were protected from the hostility of the Roman Church by the sheltering ægis of the Edict. The Great Emigration from England of 1630 to 1640 took place when English Protestants had almost given up hope of successfully opposing the autocratic plans of Charles I. All the power of royalty, supported by the increasing number of office-holding Romanists, was arrayed against them. The curbing the power of King Charles by Cromwell, and his subsequent martyrdom to the principle of absolutism, gave the Protestants of England an interval of liberty and freedom from the attacks of the Roman Church.

The protection of French Protestants by the Edict was never approved by the Romanists, and their fury at last found expression when, in 1610, the Jesuit Ravillac buried his dagger in the heart of Henry IV. The kingly successors of Henry IV had no wish to see the Edict remain as the law of the land. Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin favored the Edict and its enforcement, more from political and financial reasons than because they sympathized with religious sentiments of the Huguenots or with the principle of toleration. Mazarin's respect for the Edict was also because he was desirous of conciliating the friendship of Cromwell. These wise Cardinals saw that the industrious and godly Huguenots were a great financial asset to France and also a bond to preserve the friendship of Protestant England. Never since the times of Henry IV had the Huguenots breathed so freely and enjoyed greater freedom than in 1652. They had, therefore, no great motive for emigration at that time.

But the priests and other dignitaries of the Roman Church only accepted the situation under protest. They applied all

their ingenuity to find methods to oppress the Huguenots, and they gradually succeeded in enforcing all the repressive features of the Edict and in interpreting its provisions more stringently against them. The Huguenots did not begin to leave France as early as the Puritans left England, but when they did emigrate, their departure was for the same reasons.

Richelieu died in 1642 and Mazarin, who succeeded him, died in 1661. Louis XIV then took the reins of government in his own autocratic hands. The successor of these great Cardinals, in power if not in place, was Pere la Chaise, the confessor of Louis XIV, whose paramount allegiance was first and always to Rome. To his mind absolute submission and entire outward conformity to Romanism were objects the attainment of which was to be secured at whatever cost. Pere la Chaise found a willing ally in Madame de Maintenon, then the favorite of the King and a woman of great intellectual power, and a fervent Romanist. The bargain between them was that if she were successful in inducing her furious lover, Louis XIV, to sign the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes the church would consent to and arrange the midnight marriage which installed her as the legitimate consort of the King. Much had to be done to produce a situation which would justify the King in affixing his signature to the decree of Revocation. All the Huguenots within the kingdom were to be either converted or killed or sent to the galleys. There was not much choice between the galleys and the gallows. Escape out of France was forbidden, except to the ministers, who were told to go and not return. Speedy conversion was the object, and it was to be secured, not by the arguments of preachers or by appeals to the higher nature, but by the rough methods of a heartless soldiery. Conversion was to be accomplished by quartering in Huguenot homes a detachment of dragoons with instructions to make life miserable to husbands, wives, mothers and children, until, worn out by these persecutions, the unhappy people announced their allegiance to Rome. If the Huguenots were obstinate in their refusal to be converted, their families were broken up, the children were sent to parochial schools, the mothers to convents, and the fathers were fortunate if they escaped death or the galleys.

After diligent use of this method, from which the word dragooning derives its unsavory meaning, the dragoons reported to Pere la Chaise that a wave of conversion to Rome had swept

over France and, as a result of their religious and persuasive efforts, entire uniformity had been secured and there were no more heretics to be converted. Then, of course, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was a mere formality, only a record of a *fait accompli*. The willing King then signed the decree and his midnight marriage to Madame de Maintenon ensued according to contract. Great were the rejoicings in Rome over this holy event and fulsome were the praises lavished on His Royal Majesty, the Defender of the Faith, King Louis XIV.

The persecutions of the Huguenots in France aroused and strengthened the Protestant feeling in England. England's answer to the Revocation in 1685 was the Revolution of 1688, by which England was constituted a Protestant nation for all time and the rule of Parliament was made supreme. Thus absolutism was established in France by the Revocation in 1685, and the right of the people to govern was established in England by the Revolution of 1688. Absolutism is the ruling spirit of the Papacy, and freedom of the people, of Protestantism.

But what was France's loss was the gain of the countries to which the refugees went. France retained all the dregs of her society, her gamblers and prostitutes, and lost the most virtuous of her people by the emigration of the Huguenots. As open emigration was forbidden, they escaped by secret ways. They took shipping to England, sometimes concealed in the cargo. They travelled by what we would call an underground railroad to Germany, Holland and Switzerland, going from one friendly house to another, following by-paths and unfrequented roads through forests, until they reached some safe haven where scattered families were united. When the emigration was ended the number of refugees was estimated at 600,000 persons.

No more hospitable welcome was extended to the Huguenots than was accorded by the English colonies in North America. The motive which inspired the Great Emigration of 1630 to 1640 was the same as led the Huguenots fifty years later to leave their homes and native land. The sufferings of the Puritans from persecutions of the Roman Church were the same as the Huguenots suffered. They both lived the same lives of strict morality. They claimed the same direct communication with their Heavenly Father without the intervention of priest or pope.

In 1679 Boston possessed establishments formed by Hugue-

nots, which continually received new recruits. In 1686 a little French colony was organized at New Oxford, Massachusetts. The same year a French church was founded at Boston, and ten years later it received its pastor, a French refugee minister named Daillé. All the religious sympathies of the Puritans were aroused by the arrivals from France. Those completely destitute were liberally assisted. The towns of Massachusetts raised subscriptions to support them and gave them large tracts of land to cultivate. The other provinces followed the example of Massachusetts. The poor among the refugees were everywhere received with generous hospitality. Everywhere land was distributed to the able-bodied men, and political rights were conferred on them. In 1666 the legislature of Maryland naturalized the French Protestants settled in that province. Virginia admitted them as citizens in 1671. In 1701 the legislatures of New York and Massachusetts passed laws condemning to perpetual imprisonment any Roman Catholic priest who should be found in those colonies, and to death if thereafter found at large.* These laws were in retaliation for similar laws in France.

The State of New York served as an asylum for what then seemed to be a multitude of Huguenots. In 1656 they were sufficiently numerous for public documents to be issued in French as well as in Dutch and English. The French church Du Saint Esprit, which still exists, was then founded. The names of the founders are still familiar to us. There was Stephen De Lancey, Girard, Vincent, Jay and Fresneau, among many others. Then was founded the town of New Rochelle, whose name tells of the affection of the settlers for the city from which they came. Their letters to France informed their persecuted brethren of the favor God had shown them, and urged them to come out and join them. Pennsylvania gave refuge to many hundreds of Huguenots. William III sent a body of Huguenots to the province of Virginia. Maryland, colonized in the time of Charles I almost entirely by English and Irish Romanists, served as a retreat for a certain number of French families before and after 1685. Then the emigration of Roman Catholics ceased. In North and South Carolina the Huguenot refugees were most numerous. Judith, the wife of

* Hildreth's History of the U. S., Vol. 2, p. 227

Peter Manigault, a prominent man, wrote of her flight from France to South Carolina as follows: "We left our home (in France) in the night time, leaving the soldiers (that is, the dragoons) in bed and abandoning to them our house and all it contained. Doubting not that they would seek us everywhere, we hid for ten days at Romans in Dauphiné, in the house of a good woman who was sure not to betray us." After a long circuit through Holland, Germany and England, they arrived in Carolina, where, in spite of her hardships, she wrote: "God hath done great things for us, in giving us strength to support these trials." This is but one of many similar cases. What other colonists suffered more than these? The Huguenot emigration increased in the few years before 1700 to hundreds and thousands, whose names are still borne by their descendants at the present time. It is estimated that a million of our people trace their ancestry to French Huguenots.

From this short survey it is evident that the history of the first settlements in this country cannot be disconnected from the history of the same times in Europe. All the political principles of the colonists, and their religious tenets, were derived from the discussions in these troublous times, which preceded their departure to this country. The absolutism and the tendencies towards Romanism of Charles I, caused the influx of the Puritans from 1630 to 1640. This has rightly been called The Great Emigration. The persistent efforts of the Romanists to capture England and Scotland for Rome during the reigns of Charles II and James II, sent many more here.

The colonists of 1630 to 1640, in their hard struggle with the barren soil of New England, could at least congratulate themselves, as the exiles who were engaged in the Monmouth rebellion arrived from England, that they had escaped from the bloody assizes of Judge Jeffreys in 1685, when those who held their opinions were mercilessly condemned to execution by the hundreds.

The history of America is a continuation of that of Europe. The emigrants who stood ready to step on board the little ships which were to carry them across the sea, were the connecting links between the old world and the new. They revolved in their minds the unsettled condition of society and religion with which they were surrounded at home, and compared those conditions with the descriptions then published of the climate, the

fisheries, the soil, the crops and the people of the new world. They were only too familiar with government by assassination, and it was an attractive thought to live in a country free from religious wars and rumors of wars. To enter into the mental struggles of those who crossed the stormy North Atlantic in the frail ships of those pioneer squadrons, it is only necessary to recall the religious events which preceded the waves of emigration which broke on our shores in the 17th century.

The absorbing question which occupied all minds in the 15th and 16th centuries was religion. Men had been awakened by the perusal of the Bible, copies of which had been multiplied by the new invention of printing. Men had begun to know of a pure morality without the intervention of the priests, whose lives were notoriously evil. All the blessings of religion had begun to be enjoyed by the devout readers of the Bible outside of the church. The reformed religion had been spreading over Europe like wildfire, from the time of Luther, its great defender, to the time of Marie de Medici, its most violent enemy. The contempt with which the movement was at first regarded by the Roman Church soon changed into alarm lest the people should entirely forsake that Church and do without the priests. The necessity for action aroused the hierarchy, and all the tremendous power of the Papacy was put forth to crush the reformers. The world has never seen a greater effort than that put forth to retrieve the ground lost to Protestantism. At the close of the religious wars which then ensued, which was marked by the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, the Papists could congratulate themselves that Protestantism had collapsed and the Roman Church was restored to its former power. It could still claim to be the catholic, that is, the universal church. Protestantism had been driven back into the north, and though England's Protestant king and queen had been acknowledged to be the legitimate rulers of England, the claim was granted grudgingly and with limitations to their power.

The Peace of Ryswick ended these religious wars, and all that the Roman Church could hope to gain by war was attained. Intrigues to capture the throne of England and Scotland were ended. All France had been converted to Romanism by the efficient aid of the dragoons.

Many good men have come to this country since the year 1700, but those who came before that date, out of the seething

cauldron of European contests, form a class by themselves. If they came from England, their departure took place when the result of the struggle between absolutism and parliamentary government, between the Papacy and the Puritans, was in doubt. If they came from France, it was to escape a similar persecution, which was so fearful that the wilds of America seem a happy abode in comparison. The contest all over Europe was the same. Charles I, Charles II and James II were all Romanists at heart and believed in the absolute power of the king, granted by the grace of God. Louis XIV was like these English monarchs, an absolutist, but unlike them, a majority of his people were Romanists. He was able with their support, gradually to subdue all opposition and to fasten Romanism on France for one hundred years. Then came the fearful retribution of the French Revolution.

When the Peace of Ryswick was proclaimed in 1697, the Roman Church could claim it was the victor. The work of Luther was apparently undone. Six millions of lives had been sacrificed in the gigantic struggle to re-establish Romanism. France was denuded of her Protestant population of God-fearing people. Germany was made a waste place, but the holy Roman Catholic Church had emerged from the conflict the victor. The leading nations of Europe were Catholic and only England, Switzerland, part of Germany, the low lands and Sweden, remained Protestant. The settlements of the English colonies in America, were too remote, sparsely settled and poor to give any indication that some time in the future they would become the mighty bulwarks of Protestantism.

When the war for American Independence came on, the descendants of the French Huguenots, by instinct, arrayed themselves on the side of the Colonies, as if our contest was a continuation of the religious wars of the 17th century. Faneuil Hall, the cradle of liberty, was a gift from Peter Faneuil, descendant of Huguenot ancestry. When the news of the combat at Lexington reached South Carolina, that State was the first to adopt an independent constitution, and the first presiding officer was Henry Laurens, the son of a Huguenot. How glorious was the patriotism of these descendants of the Huguenots. Among them was Isaac Motte, Francis Marion, Samuel Legarè, John Bayard, Henry and John Laurens, John Jay, Élias Boudinot and the two Manigaults. The history of our Revolutionary

War could not be written without giving large mention of the descendants of the Huguenots.*

Our Order is particularly interested in those Huguenots who arrived in the 17th century and who were loyal to the cause of the Colonies in the Revolutionary War. A few of these it is proper to mention.

Pierre Baudoin was a Huguenot in France. He was the father of James Bowdoin, who was born in 1676, and who was the founder of Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine. During the Revolution James Bowdoin and his son of the same name were supporters of the cause of the colonies. Among their descendants was the late Robert C. Winthrop.

James Dana came to Cambridge, March 1640. Among his descendants was Richard Dana, a staunch patriot, who was among the first members of the Sons of Liberty. His son, Francis, was sent to the Continental Congress, where he became chairman of the committee on the reorganization of the army. He was sent in 1780 as minister to Russia. His descendants were numerous, and notable in professional lines, in public life, in education and religion. They are a signal witness to the value of the Huguenot's contribution to American life.

Paul Revere, a descendant of a Huguenot, was born in Boston, 1735. He joined the second expedition against Crown Point, and was a member of the Sons of Liberty. His famous ride the 18th of April, 1775, when he aroused the people of the vicinity of Boston and notified them of the coming of the British, was said to be "the most important single exploit in the nation's annals."

It is not possible that less than four or five thousand Huguenots came to New England after 1666. If New Englanders are questioned about their ancestry, there are few who do not claim some trace of French blood. This is particularly true of the eastern half of Massachusetts, says Fosdick.

The access to New York of French Protestants began as early as 1623, when Jesse de Forest gathered some Walloon families who came with the Dutch colonists in the ship, *New Netherland*, to make a settlement on Manhattan Island. Already some Huguenots were there and Jane Vigné, a Huguenot child, disputes with Virginia Dare the title of being the first

* Charles Weiss' History of French Protestant Refugees, Book 4.

white child born on the continent of North America. In 1661 half the inhabitants of Harlem were Huguenots.

A conspicuous instance of a Huguenot family as Founders and Patriots is that of Augustus Jay, a Huguenot, who settled in New York in 1686. His father, Pierre Jay, was a merchant in Rochelle, and as he resisted conversion a detachment of dragoons was quartered at his house. After many adventures he removed his family to England, losing all his fortune at Rochelle. His grandson was John Jay. The Revolution gave John Jay the opportunity to serve his country. He immediately took a prominent position in the Councils of the Colonies. He was a member of Congress 1775, was a member of the Committee that drew up the Declaration of Independence. He drafted the Constitution of the State of New York. In 1778 he was sent to Congress and was elected by that body its presiding officer. With Franklin, Adams, Jefferson and Laurens he negotiated the peace with Great Britain. In 1789 he wrote strong arguments for the Federalist in favor of the adoption of the Constitution. He was nominated by Washington, and confirmed by the Senate as the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, September, 1789. He was twice elected Governor of the State of New York, and thereafter retired to his ancestral estate at Bedford, Westchester County, N. Y. His death occurred May 17, 1829.

In 1686 Elias Boudinot came to New York. His son, Elias, Jr., about 1737 went to Philadelphia, and when the war of the Revolution broke out he was elected to the Continental Congress and became one of the most powerful leaders of that body. Four years after his first election he was chosen its president, and as such signed the Treaty of Peace with England. After the war he was greatly interested in work of a religious nature, and in 1816 was the first president of the American Bible Society. As lawyer, statesman and patriot, he was one of the most remarkable men of the Revolutionary period.

The Duché family furnished a most worthy type of Founder and Patriots. They were driven from La Rochelle, France by persecution, and Andrew Duché came to Philadelphia a few years before 1700. Rev. Jacob Duché was rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, in 1775. He has come down to us in history as the clergyman who offered the prayer at the opening of

the First Continental Congress, a prayer so patriotic and reverent that the assembled patriots gave him a vote of thanks.

James de la Plaine came to New Amsterdam in 1663. A descendant, Joseph de la Plaine, was an officer in the Revolution.

South Carolina received many Huguenots who arrived before 1700. It was in 1679 that the French refugees reached Carolina. Then came the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685; and to South Carolina were transplanted many estimable families who gave good record of themselves in our Revolution. After many controversies with colonists of other nationalities, an act was passed in 1696 making all residents Huguenots, free on taking an oath of allegiance to King William. This law conferred liberty of conscience on all Christians, with the exception of Papists which with their remembrance of the recent fearful persecutions was no more than human.

When the Revolutionary War broke out, the descendants of the Huguenots in South Carolina were quick to respond to the call of resistance to tyranny. The affair at Lexington cancelled all statutes of allegiance and notwithstanding a strong royalist following. South Carolina lined up with Puritan Massachusetts. Then when the Provincial Congress was convened Henry Laurens, a French Protestant was its first president.

The Huger family furnishes Founders and Patriots. Benjamin Huger came to South Carolina in 1686, born in the province of Poitou, France. In an attack on Charleston Major John Huger, a descendant, lost his life. He was described as "a brave officer, an able statesman, and a highly distinguished citizen."

The bold deeds of General Francis Marion, drew forth the admiration of friend and foe. He may be compared to Garibaldi, the Italian patriot, or to Robin Hood, the gallant forest ranger of England or to Phil Sheridan, the dashing cavalry officer of our Civil War. He was the grandson of a French refugee from Languedoc, who found his way with the Manigaults, the Laurens and Hugers to South Carolina. The story of his bravery sounds like a romance. At the head of Marion's brigade, composed mostly of Frenchmen, he performed astonishing deeds of valor. Once a British officer visited his camp and Marion invited him to dine. The British officer was astonished when he saw the bill of fare was pork and potatoes. He said,

a people who will submit to such privations can never be conquered.

As we rehearse the deeds of the Huguenots in our Revolution and think of their many thousand unnamed heroes and patriots, the question suggests itself, could the war have been carried on to a successful conclusion without their help?

Among those of Huguenot descent in our times, are to be remembered two of the Governors-General of our Order, Admiral George Dewey, and the late Major-General Frederick Dent Grant, as well as several of our associates.

The question suggested by this historic review, is between the respective merits of the principles which actuated the founders of our country, and the principles they antagonized in their native lands. The emigrants of the 17th century understood these questions and were willing to risk their lives and fortunes to sustain their opinions. They opposed absolutism and favored the subordination of the rulers to the people. They demanded tolerance and opposed intolerance. They opposed a church which stifled criticism while its practices were corrupt. They supported a church which was composed of people who made their lives conform to the precepts and injunctions of the Bible.

The vital questions which occupy the thoughts of the social reformer today, are bound up in the controversies of the 17th century. The essential condition of a free republican or democratic form of government, is found in the right of free speech, which was denied then. A monarchical government must stand on its dignity and enforce the law of *l'èze majesté*. If the people are to rule there must be a free interchange of thought which involves praise for that which is approved and criticism for that which is blamed. The government of the United States is a free democracy. The people counsel among themselves, discuss in the newspapers and other periodicals, and then govern by their votes, and the voice of the majority prevails.

The highest officials in the state and nation and all legislatures and public men are judged by their records, and the people by regularly constituted methods give their verdict, which is final. The history of our government is a history of debates, both private and public, and of action which takes place at the close of those debates which culminates in popular elections. The people of our country have been trained to these methods

which have finally been established as its indestructible foundations.

The spirit of discussion and criticism is universal and nothing can escape it. The question is often raised whether the people are qualified to criticize and pass judgment on the questions brought before them. The answer is that the people have assumed that right, and they will neither voluntarily relinquish it or allow it to be taken from them or diminished. All the tendency is in favor of the extension of this right.

A democracy cannot exist without public criticism and discussion. They are the safeguards to protect the people from all errors and wrongs. Every measure which seeks popular approval and support must run the gauntlet of this criticism. The public as a mass are not scientific but scientific matters and schools of medicine, are subjects of their examination by the thumb rule of results. They may not understand finance or the tariff, but the general theories which are to govern these departments must be and are finally passed on by the people. Perhaps the people are much better qualified to pass judgment of these questions that the doctrinaries are willing to allow. Comprehension is a gift more generally diffused than the power to originate.

When a church presents itself to the public in a democracy and asks popular support, it must submit to the inevitable criticism which prevails in relation to all other subjects. The Pharisees in the time of Jesus said, "This people that knoweth not the law, are accursed." But nevertheless the common people heard Him gladly and rejected the teaching of the learned doctors of the law.

The Roman Catholic Church in spite of a prejudice of 250 years standing, presents itself before the people of this democracy for acceptance and it cannot expect to escape the criticism which is our prevailing method of dealing with all subjects. Such criticism can only produce good results and should be welcomed. If there are errors and defects in practice or in theory, criticism will reveal them, and this is the first step to a better condition.

The attempt to stop criticism cannot succeed in a democracy. The claim that the church is divine and therefore is above criticism, only begins an examination into the basis of that claim. One question to which an answer is sought, is why are countries

which have been for centuries under the dominance of Roman Catholicism, so far behind Protestant nations in all that makes for the well being of the people. Criticism looks at the conditions which have prevailed in the Philippines and in other countries which have been under Roman Catholic control for centuries.

The answer cannot be found in the religion for that is practically the same as that of the most progressive peoples.

Does not the history we have examined show that the fatal defect in the Roman Church is in the fundamental requirement of absolute submission to church authorities, first to the priest and then to all above him up to the ex-cathedra utterances of the papal conclave. This is the sole test to which the Roman Church subjects its devotees. If one conforms to that he is a holy Roman Catholic and if he refuses to accept it, he is a heretic.

Such absolute submission can only be properly based on divine authority carried into effect with no admixture of error. But we find in the hierarchy of Rome men who have all the weakness of our common humanity and who shield themselves, their acts, their ecclesiastical utterances from all criticism by their followers because their system is divine. This can only be defended on the ground that the men who officer this system, are good and holy men, and their deliverances are infallibly right and true. In such a case only, would criticism be unnecessary.

There can be only one result in the operation of such a system. The human element necessarily brings disaster to the effort to carry out this scheme. There may be many individual cases where sobriety and morality are preserved to the end in a church requiring absolute submission. But the principle that there is no test for church membership but submission, is more than poor human nature can stand. Morality or immorality do not enter into such a test, and therefore immorality has the field to itself. When the Huguenot blanchisseuses were driven from France, the prostitutes of that class were allowed to remain as acceptable members of the church, because they submitted to its authority.

Submission stands guard over every avenue to the mind. Light is shut out. Spiritual and mental darkness soon envelop the people. Ignorance is fostered. Immorality is condoned, and

can obtain the indulgence of the church. All that the church demands is submission. The effect after centuries is to be seen in the debased conditions of purely Roman Catholic countries of the present day.

Submission involves and requires the silencing of criticism, the denial of laicism, and the rejection of experience as a guide. Protestantism, on the other hand demands these three powers as inalienable rights. It claims the right of criticism, to keep the church pure. It claims the right of resistance even to the death of their king or the removal of their president. It claims the right of laymen to participate in the government of nation and church through properly constituted authorities. Above all it claims the appeal to the individual conscience as verified by the individual experience. All these claims were antagonized by the Roman Church in the 17th century and before then, and that antagonism has been reaffirmed in our present day in the encyclical of Pope Pius X against modernism. Criticism, laicism and experience are there called heresies. The holy father is aghast at the effort to bring into the church the pure morals of the modernist which would turn the church upside down. He says, "The modernists lead a life of the greatest activity, of assiduous and ardent application to every branch of learning, and they possess as a rule a reputation for the strictest morality." "With regard to morals, they adopt the principles of the Americanists, that the active virtues are more important than the passive." He defines modernism as "the synthesis of all heresies." "What is left in the church" laments the Pope "which is not to be reformed according to their principles." To extirpate these evils from the church, he concludes among many other methods, that "Language is not to be tolerated which dwells on the introduction of a new order of Christian life." What words to come from the head of a church that calls itself Christian. "Anybody who in any way is found to be imbued with modernism," says the Pope, "is to be excluded without compunction from these offices (in seminaries and Catholic Universities) and those who already occupy them are to be withdrawn." In 1685 the Roman Church expelled from France its moral Huguenots. In 1907 it began the expulsion of its learned reformers.

A church coming to a Protestant country has a right to demand respectful treatment, but it must expect to be subjected

to the criticism of a sensitive public conscience, which has produced the wealth, refinement, culture and morality which it seeks the protection of and to participate in. It cannot come and bring with it the unchallenged authority which it enjoyed in a less advanced community. It must stand up and be weighed and counted and be compared with the condition of other churches in the land. Claims for divine authority invite comparisons of moral and intellectual conditions. Nothing can be taken for granted in a democracy. The simple test there is by results, for by their fruits you shall know them.

The solution which Henry IV gave for the evils of his times, and which he sealed with his blood, was for tolerance. He would have protected all his people in their diverse opinions. In an era when absolutism, intolerance and conformity were the rule, he spoke a word for tolerance which has given him undying fame and which, had he lived would have given peace to his distracted country.

Now, even in this age of progress, we need to learn from him the spirit of tolerance, which brings harmony and peace among warring factions.

We may apply to him the words uttered in honor of an American Huguenot descendant, General Joseph Warren, who gave his life at Bunker Hill, and say, can we not see Henry IV, not pale and lifeless, the blood of his gallant heart flowing out of his ghastly wound, but riding resplendent over the field of the battle of Ivry, encouraging us, as he did his army, in the words Macaulay put in his mouth:

“Press where ye see my white plume shine
Among the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme today,
The helmet of Navarre.”

THEODORE GILMAN.

New York, March 24, 1913.

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32. Paper by Winchester Fitch

33. The Huguenots, by Theodore Gilman





